



# MARAD Update



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## ***MARAD's M/V Cape Wrath Participates in Homeland Security Exercise***

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MARAD's M/V *Cape Wrath* was the training platform for a homeland security exercise during the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Region III Emergency Preparedness and Prevention and Hazmat Spills Conference in early December. The exercise was designed to test and evaluate Baltimore metropolitan area first responders to a potential terrorist incident in the maritime sector.

The scenario: Lax security at an overseas port allowed a terrorist organization to get a 20' x 8' x 8' steel conex trailer aboard a cargo ship uninspected and unlisted on the ship's manifest. The trailer was loaded with ethylene oxide canisters from four different hospitals in Southwest Asia. Attached to each of the canisters was a remote-operated motor that opens the valve. The switch to complete a circuit and open the valves was wired to a cell phone and triggered when the phone rang. Additionally, three 55-gallon drums containing sarin were in the conex trailer and a tank truck containing fuel oil was located next to this trailer.

An accomplice called the cell phone when the ship arrived in the Port of Baltimore, triggering an explosion. The force of the explosion ruptured the trailer and pushed the drums with the sarin out of the trailer. A hole was blown in the side of the cargo hold, and one drum landed in the water and the other two inside the cargo area. Liquid sarin spread over a 100-square-foot area of the ship and began to vaporize. The tank truck leaked oil and seeped into the waterway. Several crew members were killed or injured by the explosion. The local first responders must respond and mitigate this incident.

Exercise coordinator retired Fire Chief Buzz Melton narrated the evolutions of the exercise for the conference attendees and other observers. A large poster illustrating a hole blown into the ship was affixed to the port side. Two dummies and two live victims were in the water to allow the water rescue teams the opportunity to retrieve them. The victims in the water had on survival suits and personal floating devices (PFD's). A fluorescent green dye was used to simulate the oil spill in the water. Several crew members of the M/V *Cape Wrath* and other volunteers were staged as victims near the exploded tank truck and were rescued by responders working together. The collective response effort created an effective victim recovery. The rescued victims were removed and treatment was rendered at local medical facilities.

Cleanup and radiation detection was handled by the Maryland National Guard's Civil Support Team. By using radiation detection



***The trailer aboard the M/V Cape Wrath after the simulated explosion.***

equipment, the team was able to find the source of the problem, isolate it and work to prevent further contamination.

The combined responses were an overwhelming success based on comments from conference attendees and observers. Additionally, the exercise fulfilled the required homeland security training required for Baltimore metropolitan area first responders.

Portions of the exercise were broadcast on the local CBS affiliate's evening news.

The exercise and conference were hosted by the Baltimore Local Emergency Planning Committee. The exercise was sponsored by the Hazmat-Homeland Security Division of the Baltimore City Fire Department, and conducted jointly with the Baltimore City Police Department; Maryland Department of the Environment; Maryland Department of Emergency Management; Baltimore County Fire Department; Carroll County Fire Department; Harford County Fire Department; Anne Arundel County Fire Department; Howard County Fire Department; water rescue units from Baltimore City, Baltimore County, and Anne Arundel County; and the Army National Guard 32<sup>nd</sup> Civil Support Team.